Georgia Department of Human Resources

PREVENTING CHILDHOOD DROWNING

THE PROBLEM

- Drowning is the second leading cause of injury-related deaths (after car crashes) for children younger than 14 years. It is the number one cause for kids ages 1 to 4.

- Nearly 1,000 children die every year by drowning.

- Sixty percent of drownings among children younger than 5 occur in home swimming pools.

- Almost 75 percent of preschoolers who drowned were in the care of one or both parents at the time of drowning and had been out of sight for less than five minutes.

- Drowning occurs quickly and silently, so there is little to warn parents that the child is in danger.

- For every child who dies from drowning, four are hospitalized. Near-drowning can result in serious injuries, including brain damage.

HOW TO KEEP YOUR CHILDREN SAFE FROM DROWNING

Supervise children constantly while they are in or near water – whether the water is in a bathtub, a wading pool, an ornamental fish pond, a swimming pool, a spa, the beach, or a lake.

Remember that young children can drown in less than two inches of water. Drowning can happen where you'd least expect it – in the sink, the toilet bowl, fountains, buckets, inflatable pools, or puddles.

Swimming
Caregivers should learn to swim, and if your child is older than 4 years have him learn to swim too. But don't assume that if your child can swim he won't drown. Always supervise your children while they are in the water, no matter how well they swim. Fence in your pool.

Bathing
Never leave a young child unattended in the bathroom – especially while bathing – even if the child is propped up in a safety tub or bath ring.

Neighbors' pools
Find out where the water hazards in your neighborhood are. If your neighbors have pools make them aware you have a young child and ask them to keep their gates locked.

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